Dramatization in the Church School

ELIZABETH ERWIN MILLER

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DRAMATIZATION IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

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REBEKAH AT THE WELL

DRAMATIZATION IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

A TRAINING COURSE FOR LEADERS

By

ELIZABETH ERWIN MILLER

(*Elizabeth Miller Lobingier*)

Author of *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*

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TO MY HUSBAND

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GENERAL PREFACE

The progress in religious education in the last few years has been highly encouraging. The subject has attained something of a status as a scientific study, and significant investigative and experimental work has been done. More than that, trained men and women in increasing numbers have been devoting themselves to the endeavor to work out in churches and Sunday schools the practical problems of organization and method.

It would seem that the time has come to present to the large body of workers in the field of religious education some of the results of the studies and practice of those who have attained a measure of educational success. With this end in view the present series of books on "Principles and Methods of Religious Education" has been undertaken.

It is intended that these books, while thoroughly scientific in character, shall be at the same time popular in presentation, so that they may be available to Sunday-school and church workers everywhere. The endeavor is definitely made to take into account the small school with meager equipment, as well as to hold before the larger schools the ideals of equipment and training.

The series is planned to meet as far as possible all the problems that arise in the conduct of the educational work of the church. While the Sunday school, therefore, is considered as the basal organization for this purpose, the wider educational work of the pastor himself and that of the various other church organizations receive due consideration as parts of a unified system of education in morals and religion.

THE EDITORS

CONTENTS

PAGE

General Preface ix

List of Illustrations xiii

Introductory Statement 1

LESSON

1. Educational Dramatics 3

2. The Method 11

3. Blocking Out the Story 17

4. The Refining Process 21

5. Grouping 30

6. The Use of Color 39

7. Costumes 48

8. Dramatizing a Story 52

9. Biblical Material Suitable for Dramatization 56

10. Results of Using Dramatization as a Method 63

Appendix A 67

Appendix B 76

Index 87

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Rebekah at the Well	Frontispiece
	FACING PAGE
A Warrior	14
Bowing before One in Authority	18
Examples of Pleasing Grouping	30
Color Circle	40
Costumes Made and Draped by Children	50
Manner of Praying and Bowing	54
Junior Girls in a Home Missionary Play	68
Apin Burns His Half-Bagani Suit	70
The Trusted Servant Takes His Oath before Abraham	78

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

There is no longer any question in the minds of forward-looking church-school workers as to the value of dramatization as a method in teaching. The problem at the present time becomes one of knowing how to use it. Every teacher in the church school should be able to teach by means of the dramatic method. In how few schools is this the case!

The evident need for trained leaders who can conduct groups of children and young people in dramatization, and for teachers who can use it effectively in their class work, necessitates the organization of training classes.

The series of ten lessons here presented is not merely theoretical, but is the outcome of actual experience in teaching such training courses. The topics discussed are those which seemed to fill best the needs of the inexperienced worker.

In the educational program of the church, this course may be given as part of the regular training for prospective teachers; as a course in church workers' institutes; or for the special training of church-school teachers. While these are especially prepared for use in connection with the church school, they may be appropriately taught in various

other situations, e.g., summer conferences, Young Women's Christian Associations, etc.

The discussions are given in the form of lesson plans on the supposition that this method may prove most satisfactory to the majority of those who use them. Many of the assignments and discussions are based on the assumption that members of the class are using as a text the author's book, *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*.

Members of the class are urged to do the laboratory work with groups of children, suggested in each lesson. The importance of this element cannot be overemphasized. It is doubtful whether those who fail to co-operate in this way will receive any very great benefit from the instruction. The teacher of this course, therefore, should be deeply concerned about a satisfactory working out of this problem.

It is intentional that the many books containing Bible stories already put into dramatic form are omitted from the reference lists. The method advocated in this course assumes that children make their own plays.

LESSON 1

EDUCATIONAL DRAMATICS

Purpose

1. To familiarize the students with the aims and character of educational dramatics, in contrast to the more formal type.

2. To give a basis for choosing the kind of story best suited to educational dramatics.

3. To cultivate an appreciation for the use of dramatization as a method in teaching.

Brief Outline

Approach: Introductory discussion

Presentation:

1. Description of two methods used in dramatization:
   a) Formal
   b) Informal
2. Analysis of these methods:
   a) Aims of each
   b) Methods of presentation
   c) Character of the final outcome as influenced by these aims and methods
3. Discussion of biblical and other material suitable for informal dramatization

Application:

1. Listing stories which have the essential qualities for dramatization
2. Listing stories suitable for dramatization if slightly changed

APPROACH

In this class we are to discuss dramatization as a method in teaching. Our aim will be to develop the ability to conduct groups of children in the making of plays, and thus to use dramatization as a method in religious training.

We are aware that dramatization is finding a very real place in every part of the church-school program. Churches everywhere are using it, and books and magazines in the field of religious education are giving an increasing amount of space to what has been accomplished by this method.

Question: What do you think is the justification for using dramatization to such an extent in the church-school program? (Discuss this question for a few minutes, securing as many opinions as possible. This discussion is for the purpose of bringing out the different points of view among the students, which may be used as a basis for the presentation of the lesson.)

PRESENTATION

In the light of the reasons just given for including dramatization in the church-school program, let us draw a picture of a piece of dramatic work in a church school.

A special day is approaching; it may be Thanksgiving, or Christmas, or Children's Day. Feeling that the day demands some form of entertainment, the teachers begin to search desperately for a play or something of the kind which they may work up with the children. They finally get hold of a play which has been written for children to give on such an occasion. Immediately the parts are assigned and the children are told to learn them. Rehearsals begin. Confusion follows. Willie will not learn his part. Mary cannot get the sense of hers. Children who are not on the stage, but are waiting their turn to appear, are noisy and uninterested. No child seems to know what it is all about. Each one is told to do a certain thing which will fit him into the whole scheme, but he has no grasp of what the whole scheme is. Some grown person tells him to stand here or there; to say it "this way"; or to do something with his arms, which he is sure to forget. The whole thought of everyone is bent upon making a success of the entertainment. It seems difficult to get the children to enter into the spirit of it. On the night of the public presentation, the children are nervous and excited, as well as self-conscious. There is great applause on the part of parents and friends, and every child is told over and over again, "How well you did!"

Question: How many of the aims mentioned were accomplished in the experience just related? (Discuss.)

In contrast to this, let us draw another picture: A group of children is studying the story of Joseph. They decide to "play" that story, and therefore begin to put it into dramatic form. After their teacher has told them the story, together they discuss its division into scenes. The scenes are roughly blocked out, and they begin to act out the parts, making up the words as they act. Those who do not happen to be acting at any particular time watch with keen interest the ones who are taking part, and are ready to give constructive suggestions. The teacher asks questions from time to time, with the object of guiding the children in their thinking. Each child has the opportunity of taking the parts of many characters in the play, and as the work develops the group votes on the child who interprets each character the best. Children are assigned definite parts in this way, but every child is able to take the part of any character. After they have the action well worked out, and the thought expressed in their own words, they decide to change the wording into biblical form. In the end they have a play which is well formed, artistic, and truly their own product. They have thus relived the story over and over again, and have consciously put forth their best efforts to make the result beautiful. When the play is as nearly finished as they can make it, the children invite their parents and friends to see it,

although the public presentation has not been the aim.

Question: Which of these two methods is the more truly educative? Why? (Discuss.)

Let us analyze these two types more closely. (This analysis may be in the nature of a summary of the previous discussions, and may be given in some such way as the following.)

In order to make a distinction between them, let us call the first a formal type, and the second an informal or educational type of dramatization. In the first we find that children are participating in an exercise that has been superimposed upon them by an adult. They have comparatively little comprehension of the meaning of it all. Their desire is to "show off" on a stage. The sole aim in this performance is the entertainment which it affords the audience. The dramatization here is an end in itself. In informal or educational dramatics we find the situation entirely different. The chief aim of the teacher is not primarily to give an entertainment; it is rather to develop the children through this method. Dramatization is thus used as a means to an end, and not as an end in itself. In this class our discussion will be confined entirely to the informal method.

As our present problem deals with the making of plays from stories, our first consideration will be the kind of stories suitable for dramatization.

Question: What are the characteristics of a story well suited for dramatization? (Through discussion develop such points as the following, using concrete stories to illustrate each point.)

1. The story must have a sound basic structure: a beginning, or setting, a climax, and a satisfactory ending.

2. There must be a succession of events or movement throughout the story.

3. The story must involve much action.

4. The story must be morally sound according to our present-day standards.

5. The story must deal with experiences within the understanding of the participating group.

The teacher may use any good story, such as the story of Isaac and Rebekah, and show how each of the foregoing requirements is fulfilled. All of these points will be discussed in greater detail in Lesson 9.

APPLICATION

1. Name stories from the Bible or other sources that have the qualities indicated above. (Such as the stories of Joseph, the Good Samaritan, etc.)

2. Name stories that do not have all these qualities, or about which there is question. (Such as the stories of Jacob, Samson, etc.)

3. Name stories that are mere incidents, and that might be dramatized, but without the complete structure for a play. (Such as the stories of Abraham and Lot dividing the land, Jacob's meeting with Esau, etc.)

4. Name stories that require adaptation in order to make them usable for good plays (additions, subtractions, or modifications through imagination). (Such as the stories of the boy with the loaves and the fishes, Elijah and the widow's meal, etc.)

ASSIGNMENT

1. Find a group of children with whom you may dramatize a story. (No one at work in the church school will find it difficult to secure such a group. If there are more students than groups of children available, two students can easily work with the same group.) Be ready to report at the next session as to the number of children in your group, together with their age and sex.

2. Read chapters i and ii of *The Dramatization of Bible Stories* (Miller). Chapter i will reinforce what has been discussed in this lesson. Chapter ii will give a general discussion of the method of procedure.

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LESSON 2

THE METHOD

PURPOSE

To acquaint students with the general method of procedure in educational dramatics.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach: Questions which will bring to mind the salient points of the previous lesson

Presentation:

1. Discussion of the general method employed in educational dramatics: Listing of twelve points noted in chapter ii of the text
2. Discussion of variations of this method:
   a) When used with primary children
   b) When used with junior and intermediate children
   c) When used with the high-school age

Application: The dramatization of one short story by the class

APPROACH

(As a basis for discussion, questions may be asked which will recall the points in the previous lesson. The following are suggestive.)

Questions: What are the characteristics of the informal type of dramatization?

How would you distinguish this type from the more formal type?

What is the value of informal or educational dramatics? What is the value of formal dramatics?

Give the necessary qualities of a story suited for use in informal dramatization.

PRESENTATION

Describe the general method of procedure which may be followed in presenting a story for informal dramatization.

(Discuss this description in detail, and allow many to participate in the discussion.

List the steps in the method on the blackboard. This list may be somewhat like the list of twelve steps given at the end of chapter ii in the text.)

It is important to note here that the method which we have been discussing, and which we have divided into definite steps, is purely suggestive. It is given in this way to be used merely as a working basis, and should be varied to meet the needs of different ages and different conditions. Under no circumstances should it be clung to slavishly so that it becomes wooden and stereotyped. By becoming thoroughly familiar with this one method of procedure, however, the leader of a group in educational dramatics will be all the more able to vary it so that it will be of the greatest help to her.

Question: To children of what age should all twelve steps of this method be given? Why?

(The discussion here should bring out the fact that children who can read their Bibles and write readily can easily bring their dramatization into a more finished form. Chil-

dren in the primary department are not able to do this, and thus the finished dramatization should not be expected of them. The older the group, the more finished the final form should be.)

Question: How would you adapt this method of procedure to beginners and primary children?

(The discussion should bring out the thought that dramatization with a group of young children should always be free and spontaneous; that it is neither necessary nor desirable that they put their story into a fixed form. The words and action should be constantly changing with the different interpretations, and the joy of playing the story over and over again should be the outcome. Perhaps the method with younger children should proceed no farther than through steps 9 or 10, according to those listed on page 16 of the text.)

Question: What groups may be able to carry their dramatization through steps 11 and 12?

(Juniors, intermediates, and high-school pupils should be able to do this. The product becomes more finished with each advance in age.)

Question: What contribution may high-school pupils make to this method that should not concern the younger children?

(Bring out the fact that a more intensive study on their part of the structure of a good drama, and an effort to put theirs into better written form, should be characteristic of this age. It is here that good dramas may be read and compared with the ones that they are making.)

APPLICATION

We may imagine ourselves a group of primary children. We are going to dramatize a story, using the method we have just discussed. Note the

steps in the method as we proceed, and be ready to discuss it later.

(Tell the story of The Great Feast [Luke 14:16–24] or some other very simple incident. Develop the dramatization along lines suggested by the following questions.)

Questions: How many scenes shall we have in this play? (Some would make one scene out of it, some two, some three.)

What would you include in the one scene? in the two scenes? in the three?

(Determine the number of scenes by majority vote.)

Let us act this out in ——— scenes as you have voted.

Question: What characters do we need?

(Call for volunteers to take the parts. A class of adults are much more self-conscious, and not so anxious to volunteer as are children. The teacher may have to call on certain ones by name in order to start the play.)

We shall now act out this scene. You may group yourselves as you think the characters should be, and say and do what you think they would say and do. You who are not acting will notice carefully everything that happens. After this scene is over we shall discuss the good and bad points.

(Allow the scene to be played through, no matter how crudely, without interruption. Then ask such questions as:

What did you like best about this scene?

What part would you like to see improved?

A WARRIOR

Note the simplicity as well as the effectiveness of this costume, with the sword, spear, shield, and helmet. These may be made easily by a third-grade child.

Choose other characters and in the same free manner play through this scene again. If more than one scene has been decided upon, follow the same procedure.

At the end of this class dramatization a summary of what has been done may be given as follows.)

This method of procedure which we have just followed is the best method to use with primary children. A play should not be much more definite in form than this, in the second or third grades. Kindergarten and first-grade children should play through the story only for the fun of doing it over and over again, and should not be expected to put forth a conscious effort to improve. The aim with small children is that their interpretations shall be spontaneous and lacking in self-consciousness. The steps through which we have just gone are also the foundation steps in any dramatization with older children.

ASSIGNMENT

(At this time call for reports in regard to the groups of children with which the students expect to work. Ask for a written statement including the number of children in the group, their ages, and the time at which they can be met.)

1. Select a simple biblical incident, on the order of the one dramatized today, which you will like to use with your group of children. Become so familiar with this story that you will be able to present it to your group after the next lesson.

2. Read in the text chapter x, "The Dramatization of New Testament Parables." This chapter discusses incidents similar to those on which you are working.

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LESSON 3

BLOCKING OUT THE STORY

PURPOSE

To give instruction in the first steps of dramatization.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach: Reports of incidents selected for use with the groups of children

Presentation: Discussion of the meaning of "blocking out" a story for dramatization:

1. Steps in the method
2. Characteristics of the dramatization at this stage

Application:

1. Discussion of the blocking out of an incident requiring two scenes
2. Dramatization by the class through the stage of the first blocking out

APPROACH

We shall have brief reports of each story which is to be presented to a group of children.

(Call for reports covering the main points in each story and the division into scenes.)

Question: In what way have you changed or adapted your story? Why did you do this?

As each story is given, be ready to discuss it from these points of view:

1. Has it a good structure?

2. Is it well adapted to the group of children for whom it is intended?

3. Is the division into scenes the best possible division?

(Discuss each story along the lines of the foregoing suggestions. See that the criticism is constructive so that each student will be ready to present her story to the group of children before the next lesson if possible.)

PRESENTATION

Now that these stories are ready to be presented, let us discuss the method of procedure.

Question: How will you begin with your group? How much do you expect to accomplish during the first hour?

You should be able to block out your story roughly during the first hour. We did this in the last lesson. What steps did that involve?

(List these steps)

1. Telling the story.
2. Discussing the division into scenes.
3. The first free acting out of each scene.

In order to be sure that this first part of your work with the children has certain essential characteristics, keep in mind your underlying aims and constantly ask yourself the following questions:

BOWING BEFORE ONE IN AUTHORITY

1. Am I in any way superimposing my ideas and suggestions upon the children?

2. Am I, instead, developing and guiding their thought so that they feel that the result is their own?

3. Is the development of the children the first consideration in my mind, or am I more anxious to get a good play out of this experience?

APPLICATION

Let us read the story of Elijah and the Widow's Meal and try to dramatize it through the blocking-out stage.

(Read the story to the class as found in I Kings 17, and discuss the two possible scenes. Raise the question of dealing with the miraculous in a dramatization. Indicate that the story may be complete without including that element; if it is brought in, however, it may be told about rather than acted out. Allow the class to act out freely the two suggested scenes.)

ASSIGNMENT

1. Meet your group of children and block out your story with them.

2. Write out in dramatic form these two scenes of the story of Elijah and the Widow's Meal, using the biblical language.

3. Read chapter viii in the text, "Abraham and the Three Guests." Use this as a basis of comparison in working out the form and language of your own story.

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LESSON 4

THE REFINING PROCESS

PURPOSE

To develop the method for securing a more finished product from the first rough form of the play.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach:

1. Reports from workers with groups of children, as to
   a) Methods employed the first hour of meeting
   b) Definite standards of attainment which have been accomplished through the first steps in the method of presentation
2. Outline of procedure for the second meeting with the children

Presentation:

1. Discussion of the method for securing a more finished product from the first rough draft
2. Listing possible methods for further development of the play toward these ends

Application:

1. Reading and discussion of the written form of Elijah and the Widow's Meal
2. Appointment of a committee to make a composite play from these results

APPROACH

(Call for reports from each individual who has met with a group of children since the last class meeting. Have each one describe:

1. The method of procedure.
2. The response of the children.
3. The attainments which seem to have been reached.

Summarize these reports in somewhat the following manner)

By the end of the first meeting, or certainly by the end of the second meeting, the following results should be realized:

1. Each child should know the story.

2. Thus far there should have been no set or stereotyped action or wording, but both should be capable of change with each interpretation.

3. Each child should have had the opportunity of playing several, if not all, of the parts.

(Discuss plans for the second meeting with the children's groups.)

PRESENTATION

Let us suppose that we are dealing with children above the primary age, and that they desire a more finished play than the rough blocking out which we have been discussing.

Question: How finished should we expect the work of junior and intermediate children to be?

(In discussing this question, bring out the point that the result must be a finished result *judged from the view-*

point of what the children themselves are capable of attaining, and not by what adults might attain. The teacher of the group may make suggestions and additions and dictate to such an extent that although the result may be beautiful, yet it will not represent the best effort of the group; the final product will be hers and not theirs. The teacher, on the other hand, may so skilfully guide the thought and appreciation of the group that they put forth their best effort and secure a result as beautiful and as finished as they are capable of making it.)

Question: What elements must be considered in order to put the play into a better and more permanent form?

(Discuss [1] the structure, [2] the wording, [3] beauty. It may be well to compare some one or two well-known dramas as to the underlying structure and written form. The question of changing the oral wording into the best possible written English, or into the biblical form, is an important one. Discuss the importance of selecting the most beautiful and poetic forms of biblical language to use with children. Discuss the assignment in the text, "Abraham and the Three Guests," noting the development from the first to the final form.)

Question: How are we to develop with the children a permanent written form which is beautiful and which represents their work?

(Develop such points as the following, listing them on the blackboard; these are the definite steps in the method for refining the rough draft of the play which has not thus far been put into written form.)

We may develop a permanent written form in these ways:

1. Criticism by the children including both good and bad points in the acting and the wording.

2. A conscious effort on the part of each participant to improve by these suggestions.

3. A general feeling of satisfaction in the fact that the play is becoming better each time it is played through.

4. Study and comparison of some good drama; definite attempt to get a better structure.

5. Changing the words into a permanent written form by (*a*) a committee from the group to formulate them, or (*b*) volunteers to write out different scenes to be submitted to the group, or (*c*) a composite production made by the group and dictated to the teacher who writes it out.

6. Group criticism of these results with suggestions from the leader as one of the group. It is legitimate for the teacher to make suggestions to the extent of keeping the English correct and guiding the thought toward more beautiful expression.

7. Constant comparison with other written plays.

8. Choice of characters for each part by the group. These are selected on the basis of the best interpretations of the different parts.

9. Learning the parts according to the written form.

10. Decision of the group in regard to the action in the play.

11. Careful grouping of each scene in order to produce a beautiful picture.

12. The making of simple costumes by the children.

13. Conscious effort to express what is said in a beautiful manner, with clear enunciation and correct pitch of voice.

Although the parts are "learned," and although the action becomes more or less fixed, yet the dramatization should be characterized all the way through by the spirit of freedom and spontaneity with which it began. Changes may come at any time, if there is a reason for them. Each child should be so full of the spirit and the understanding of the story he is interpreting that if one forgets the *exact* words he can easily give the thought in his own words; or if one character is absent at any performance another child can easily take his place. (See Appendix B for an example of a children's play which may be considered a "finished product" for junior high-school girls.)

APPLICATION

In the light of the suggestions just given, we shall read and criticize the composite play which the committee has prepared.[1]

[1] As an example of the working out of this problem by a committee of adults in a training class on dramatization in the church school, the following composite play is here presented. It is given here in the exact form in which it was submitted by the committee for class criticism.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

SCENE I

PLACE: Outside the city gate.

CHARACTERS: Elijah and the Woman.

[*The woman is gathering sticks while* ELIJAH *approaches.*]

Woman [*looking up*]: The heavens are still like brass! No cloud appeareth to cast a cooling shadow, or to give promise of coming rain. [*Sighs deeply.*] Ah, well—for us—my son and me—the suffering and want will soon be over. [*Sees* ELIJAH *wearily approaching.*] A traveler approacheth along the dusty road. [*As he draws nearer he sinks down at the edge of the road and motions to her.*] An old man, foot-sore and weary. He calleth. [*Steps toward him.*]

Elijah: Woman, I thirst. Fetch me, I pray thee a little water in a vessel that I may drink.

Woman: I will. Thou must be weary and thirsty, for I can see that thou hast traveled far. [*She turns to go.*]

Elijah: Stay yet a moment. Bring me too I pray thee a morsel of bread in thine hand.

Woman [*shaking her head slowly*]: As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse; and behold I am gathering these few sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son that we may eat it and die.

Elijah: Fear not. Go and do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after, make for thee and thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

Woman [*to herself*]: How can this thing be?—and yet [*to* ELIJAH]—I go, oh man of God, to do thy bidding.

Elijah: Yea, go. For I am faint from thirst and hunger. Within the city gate I shall await thy return. [*He follows woman off the stage.*]

SCENE II

PLACE: Room in the widow's house.

CHARACTERS: Widow, Her Son, and Elijah.

[*The widow is seen spreading a mat on the floor and placing on it a dish of cakes, some greens, etc.*]

Boy [*coming in*]: The sun is red in the west, my Mother. Is the evening meal not yet prepared? [*Helps Mother straighten mat, etc.*]

Woman: It is, my son. Go now and call the prophet that we may eat.

Boy: Yea, Mother,—and Mother, dost thou think that he will notice the greens that I gathered by the river-side?

Woman: He surely will notice them, my son. And now make haste. [*Exit boy and returns with prophet.*]

Boy [*talking to prophet as they enter*]: But now every evening since thou didst come to us, my Mother has baked a goodly number of meal cakes and has spread them with oil.

Woman [*turning toward them*]: Our meal is ready, let us sit down and eat. [*The prophet raises his hand in blessing and all sit down.*]

Elijah: Whence came these greens so fresh and crisp? Their like I have not seen for many a month.

Woman: This morning ere the sun had risen my son went to the marsh that hath been dry so long, to see if since the rain of ten days past he might perchance discover a little water-cress, and there he found a tiny patch. It is small as thou dost see, but green and tender, and oh, so good to look upon!

Elijah: How quick was its response to God's good rain! Thine own response to God's good hand hath been more slow; yet have I seen it growing like a tender plant, and in its growth I daily do rejoice. [*Slight pause while they eat.*]

Boy: Mother, rememberest thou the day when I was faint with hunger and thou didst go to gather a few sticks—and when thou saidst the first cake was for the man of God, dost thou remember how I cried?

Woman: Yea, son, but never hadst thou need to cry again, for all took place according to his word.

Boy [*speaking to prophet*]: How glad we are that thou didst come to lodge with us!

Woman: Our lives, my son, did he save once, and *thine* a second time.

Prophet: The Lord Jehovah, He supplied thy needs and gave thee back thy son.

Woman: Yea verily, it was then my faith in God began to grow, and now I know thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true. [*They all rise together and bow their heads while* ELIJAH *raises his hand in blessing.*]

(If time permits, have different persons read the parts in this dramatization and in this way obtain the group criticism.)

ASSIGNMENT

1. Read in the text chapter iii, "Joseph." This will give a basis for judging a finished result.

2. Those who are working with children's groups may continue blocking out the play or may begin the refining process if the children are ready.

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LESSON 5

GROUPING

PURPOSE

1. To develop an appreciation for beautiful arrangement.

2. To increase knowledge of the fundamental principles underlying good composition.

3. To give the method for applying these principles with children.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach: Reports from workers with groups of children as to

1. What has been accomplished toward refining the play
2. What may be done to make the play more beautiful

Presentation:

1. Listing the elements which increase the beauty of a play: wording; grouping; color
2. Discussion of grouping:
   a) Comparison of the composition of each scene with the composition of a good picture
   b) Discussion of some of the fundamental principles underlying the composition of a good picture, which might be applied to

EXAMPLES OF PLEASING GROUPING

grouping on the stage: center of interest; variety and size of masses; balance; line; contrast

c) Discussion of the method of applying each of the foregoing points to arrangement on the stage

d) Discussion of the effect of constant movement in a scene

e) Listing mechanical devices which help to keep the scene beautiful

Application: An attempt on the part of the class to secure as beautiful grouping as possible in each scene of the story of Joseph

APPROACH

(Allow a few minutes for general reports from each worker followed by suggestions from the class. Begin the discussion for this lesson with a definite question, such as the following)

Question: How much have you been able to accomplish toward refining your play along the lines suggested in the previous lesson?

(The discussion should indicate how much has been done toward giving the dramatizations a more definite structure and wording.)

Question: Can you think of any other element which is necessary to make the final outcome more pleasing and finished?

("Beauty or pleasing arrangement on the stage" will probably be the answer from someone who has gone far enough with the dramatization to notice the lack of this element.)

One of the greatest faults of the inexperienced teacher is the tendency to ignore the element of beauty. The underlying aim of educational dramatics (with children above third grade) is only partially accomplished if the children think the play is finished when they have given it a definite structure and have changed the oral wording into written form. The teacher must lead the children to feel the necessity, not only of *playing the story through*, but of *playing it as beautifully as is possible for them*. Children can be taught simple elements of beauty which they will try to incorporate in their aims to secure their best result. The teacher who arbitrarily gives these simple principles to children and directs the application of them is at fault as much as, or even more than, the teacher who omits them entirely. The desire to make the play beautiful to the eye as well as to the ear, and the ability to do this, should be developed in the children.

PRESENTATION

Question: What are some of the elements which will make the play more beautiful to look at?

(Such answers as the following will probably be given:

1. Pleasing grouping of individuals.
2. Arrangement of setting and properties.
3. Color of costuming and stage setting.)

In this lesson we shall discuss grouping or arrangement on the stage. Each scene may be

likened to a picture, and the same principles which make the composition of a picture good may be applied to the composition of a scene on the stage. It must be borne in mind that the scene on the stage is constantly changing so that it involves one picture after another.

(The following points may be illustrated by analyzing several good pictures which may be in the classroom. The teacher may combine lecture and discussion in developing these principles.)

The element in the composition of a good picture which is of greatest significance to the composition of a scene is the *center of interest.*

Question: Where is the center of interest in each of these pictures?

Question: In what way has each center of interest been emphasized so that you recognize it as the center of interest?

(Try to have pictures which illustrate each of the following methods of focusing attention upon the center of interest:

1. By position.
2. By contrast in size.
3. By lines which run toward it.
4. By color.)

Question: In what ways may we call attention to the center of interest on the stage?

(Note that the points given above may be applied appropriately as follows:

1. Position: The center of interest should, as a rule, be placed near the center of the stage, although not exactly in the center. This is true of all good pictures.

2. Contrast in size: The center of interest may be one person or a group of persons, but in either case it should be separated from other groups and individuals so that the mass, whether large or small, stands apart and contrasts in size with other groups.

3. Action: This element may secure the same result as that of line in a picture. The action of the center of interest itself will hold attention there; gestures and looks from other parts of the stage may direct the eye to the center of interest.

4. Color: Bright color will attract attention to the center of interest. This subject will be discussed in Lesson 6.)

Question: (Using some good picture in which the masses of light and dark are clearly recognized and the variation in size easily noticed.) How do the masses of light and dark in this picture compare in size?

A good composition often has masses of different sizes, large, medium, and small. The massing or grouping of individuals on the stage should involve this same principle. If there are many individuals in one scene, divide them into uneven groups; decide in which of these groups the center of interest is to be and place it near the center of the stage rather than off at one side. As the action changes throughout the scene, the center of interest may pass from one group to another and the original grouping may break up, but other groups should form again. Avoid the confused appearance of individuals scattered over the stage with no definite plan or massing. The scene, as a

whole, should always give the feeling that there is a unity which binds together the dominant and subordinate parts.

The groups in each scene should be placed so as to preserve the balance of the stage, just as the forms in a picture give balance to the composition. If the large group is on one side of the stage, the effect is more pleasing if the two smaller groups are on the other side. When there are only two people on the stage at one time, it is better not to have them both on the same side for any length of time.

Question: How may we secure on the stage the same effect as that produced by line in a picture?

(Let the discussion bring out the following points)

Groups or individuals may be placed so that they indicate direction, and cause the eye to travel toward the center of interest. A gesture or the movement of a person may carry the eye as does a line.

The element of contrast is found in a good picture. This is most effectively shown through the use of color. (Illustrate from picture if possible.) Contrast of shapes and masses is also important.

Question: How may we secure contrast with groups of people?

The smallest group (which may be one person) may be placed close to the largest group, and thus attract attention by the contrast in size.

(At the end of this discussion give the class a few of the following mechanical devices, which must be remembered in order to keep the effect of beauty and order in the arrangement on the stage.)

As a general rule:

1. People leaving the stage, or coming on to the stage, during a scene should not pass in front of the center of interest, i.e., never allow anyone to pass between those who are acting or speaking and the audience.

2. Anyone who turns on the stage should make the turn toward the audience.

3. One who is speaking or acting should always face the audience; he should never have his back turned unless there is some special call for this position in the play.

4. Two people speaking together should be standing or seated so that the audience may see the side face of one and the full face of the other. It is possible for two people to move slightly as they are speaking, so that the one who speaks more nearly faces the audience.

5. Gestures should always be made with the hand or arm on the side of the body away from the audience.

6. There should never be but one action at a time.

7. There should never be more than one person speaking at a time, unless clearly demanded by the action of the play.

8. Do not lose sight of the value of pauses, as in normal conversation.

Question: How would you develop these principles with a group of children?

(The discussion should bring out the fact that all these principles of grouping or arrangement on the stage may be developed from the children, but not all should be given at one time. The development must come slowly and as the need arises.)

APPLICATION

(Assign the parts in scene i of the dramatization of "Joseph," as given in chapter iii of the text. Have these parts read and acted out. The attention of the class should be directed to the grouping, and special effort should be placed upon applying the principles just discussed. Ask questions of the class which might be asked in developing these points from children.)[1]

ASSIGNMENT

1. Read in the text chapter xiii, "Stage Setting and Properties." Be ready to discuss this at the next session.

2. Make a list of the necessary stage setting and costuming which you think you will need for your play with the children.

[1] This lesson may be taught effectively by beginning with the Application and developing the principles from the class as they see the need for them in their acting. The latter part of the lesson may be in the form of a summary in which these principles are formulated. According to this method the class deduces the principles through work on the project.

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LESSON 6

THE USE OF COLOR

PURPOSE

1. To give an appreciation of the use of beautiful color in costuming and stage setting.

2. To increase knowledge of the principles underlying the combining of colors.

3. To give the method for applying these principles with children.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach:

1. Discussion of chapter xiii, in the text, "Stage Setting and Properties"
2. Summary of the points in the preceding lesson: Elements which make a beautiful scene on the stage:
   a) Grouping
   b) Color

Presentation:

1. The use of color in a scene:
   a) Costumes
   b) Setting and properties
2. The most pleasing combination of colors:
   a) Contrasting colors
   b) Related colors

3. The psychological effect of color

Application: The effect of different color combinations illustrated by colored samples of cloth

APPROACH

(Ask a few leading questions on the assignment in the text, such as the following)

Questions: Under what conditions are stage properties and settings of value in educational dramatics?

What kind of properties and settings have no place in children's dramatizations? Why?

How did you determine the list of properties and settings needed in your play?

(Call for the reading of some of the lists asked for in the previous assignment.)

Question: What elements have we considered that will make the dramatizations more pleasing and finished? (Definite and beautiful written form; pleasing grouping or arrangement on the stage.)

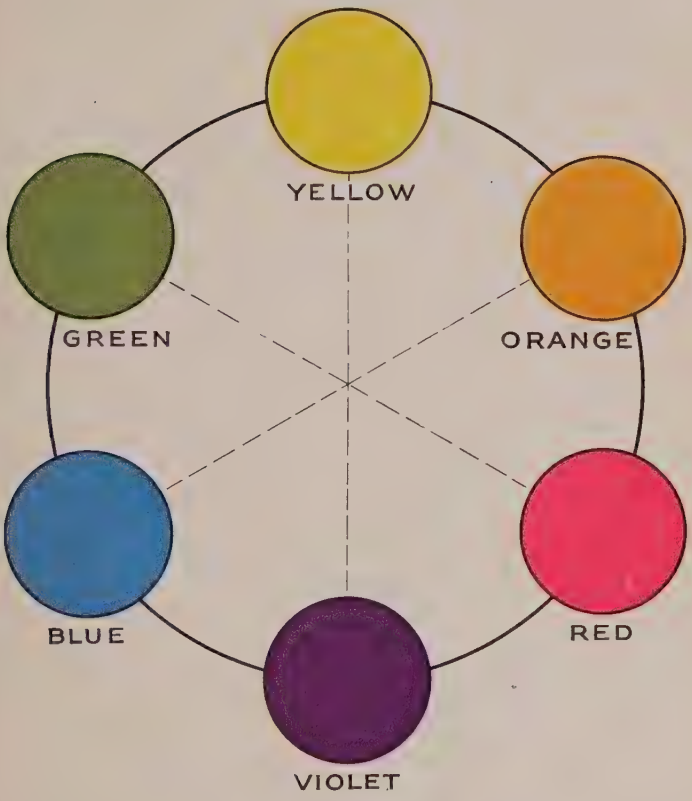
Having discussed these two points, we come now to the element of color.

PRESENTATION

Question: Where may we use color in a dramatization? (Costumes, setting, and properties.)

Question: How are we to use color to the best advantage?

(Discuss this question sufficiently to obtain the viewpoint of the class. Summarize the answers, or supplement if necessary with the following points)



COLOR CIRCLE

It is usually the case that the inexperienced teacher pays little or no attention to the element of color. She uses all the bright colors that the children may bring for their costumes, side by side on the stage, without regard to their relation to one another. With a little thoughtful planning and a knowledge of the ability of different colors to emphasize the emotion of a scene, she may secure a most beautiful result. The usual conglomeration of colors in children's dramatics always detracts from the beauty of the result, no matter how spontaneously and charmingly the story may be interpreted. To emphasize the thought given in the previous lesson, let us state again: The teacher is missing a large part of her opportunity for training children through the dramatic method if she does not develop the aesthetic interest.

Question: How are we to determine what colors will secure the most pleasing effects?

(Obtain opinions from the class.)

There is a definite theory underlying the combination of colors which the leader of a group of children should consciously employ. She would not give these principles of color harmony to the younger children, but it is possible for her to guide them in their selection of colors so that they will come to like more pleasing combinations.

(Discuss briefly ways in which this may be done.)

To children of intermediate and high-school ages some of the simpler principles of color harmony may be given. The children should not only know that they like two colors together, but why the combination is pleasing.

Question: What are some of the simpler principles which will give a basis for combining certain colors?

(The teacher should have a large color circle which can be seen by all the members of the class. This may be made by pasting circles of the six spectrum colors, at full intensity, around the circumference of a large circle drawn on cardboard, in the order given in the accompanying figure. If possible have many pieces of cloth of different colors so that combinations may be illustrated. Give the following simple explanation and principles, and illustrate by the color circle and the samples of cloth.)

The color circle is a diagram of the six spectrum colors in their relation to one another. The three strongest hues, yellow, red, blue, form an equilateral triangle in the circle. The other three hues, orange, violet, green, form another equilateral triangle. It will be noted that the yellow and red, running toward each other, intermingle to make orange; the red and blue make violet; and the blue and yellow make green. Although there are but six hues named on the circle, it can readily be seen that there are any number of hues lying between each two given points. Halfway between any two colors, where they equally intermingle, we have such colors as yellow-orange, orange-red,

red-violet, violet-blue, blue-green, green-yellow. A hue may be called red-violet or violet-red, depending upon the predominance of one color over the other.

Each hue has what is called a complement, or color-opposite. When two complements are mixed in equal amounts neutral gray is formed. The hues which are exactly opposite on the circle are the complements of each other, e.g., yellow and violet result in neutral gray when mixed in equal proportions; orange and blue are complements; also red and green. (In the last case, strictly speaking, blue-green, rather than green at full intensity, is the exact opposite of red. The reason for this is given in any full treatment of the theory of color.)

These six spectrum hues at full intensity are seldom pleasing when used in large amounts; each one is much more pleasing if it is slightly grayed or neutralized by the addition of a small portion of its complement. Colors are more restful and less obtrusive when they approach the neutral. Brilliant colors, or colors at full intensity, give pleasure when used in small spots. Neutral colors are most satisfying for large areas. Black and white are exact opposites also, and may be used effectively with any colors.

Even though we ultimately test every result by the question, "Is it pleasing?" yet the knowl-

edge of a few principles is a great aid in training our likes and dislikes. The following principles of color harmony will be helpful in securing beautiful results on the stage:

The two most simple kinds of harmony, or possible ways of grouping colors, are (*a*) related or analogous colors, and (*b*) complementary or contrasting colors.

Related colors are any two or three colors adjacent on the color circle, having one color as a common element, e.g., blue, violet, green. As a related group, blue would be the common element, and thus the violet would become blue-violet and the green, blue-green.

Contrasting colors are those found opposite each other on the circle.

In planning the color scheme for any scene, it should always be kept in mind that the effect is never pleasing unless one color seems to dominate. If yellow should be chosen for the dominant hue in a scene to be worked out as an analogous harmony, the other colors used may be yellow-orange, orange, yellow-green, or browns and tans in which the yellow is most evident. If yellow is used as the dominant color in a complementary harmony, the other colors used may be such as violet, blue-violet, red-violet, but these contrasting colors must never be employed to such an extent that it is difficult to recognize one color as dominant.

Question: What color scheme would you think appropriate for a scene in which there is action, strong feeling, energy, etc.? (The harmony in which there are strong contrasts in color.)

Question: What color scheme would you suggest for a scene in which there is calmness, ease, repose, etc.? (A group of related colors may be used.)

Question: When the color scheme of a scene is very high in key, i.e., when light colors are used throughout, what is the emotional effect? (Lightness, gaiety, motion, etc.)

Question: When the color scheme is low in key, i.e., when dark colors are used, what is the emotional effect? (Heaviness, strength, quietness, thoughtfulness, repose, etc.)

Question: Which of the colors on the circle seem to you warm colors? (Yellow, orange, red. Note our unconscious association of these colors with fire and sunlight.)

Question: Which seem to you cool colors? (Violet, blue, green. Note our association of these colors with water, with evening, with distance, etc.)

Question: What would be the psychological effect of a scene in which there were reds, yellows, and oranges? (The effect of heat or warmth, stirring action, etc.)

Question: What emotion, or impression, would you represent if your scene were full of violets, blues, and greens? (Coolness, calmness, rest.)

(This discussion of color is necessarily meager. No mention has been made of the theory of color which deals with white light. The theory here given is that employed by the artist and is concerned with colored pigments. This is of most practical value to the worker in educational dramatics.)

APPLICATION

(The following problems are to be discussed and illustrated by the colored samples)

Questions: How will color affect the center of interest in a scene?

If the most prominent character wears an orange costume, what colors would be pleasing in the groups surrounding? (Blues, violets, and browns; no color as strong as the orange.)

If a king on the throne wears a violet robe, what color would be pleasing on another important character who stands close to him? (Yellow or white.) Why?

What colors are best for servants, soldiers, and those characters who stand in the background? (Colors that are more nearly neutral, e.g., tones full of gray.) Why?

What colors are appropriate for curtains in the background, and for pieces of stage property? (Dull, grayed, or neutral tones.) Why?

In the modern theater colored lighting often secures the effects here discussed. In connection with educational dramatic work for children, it is unnecessary to discuss this phase of the subject; the problem here is one of the greatest simplicity in costuming and stage setting. The fact that children have learned to appreciate, and to choose for themselves, gives them an infinitely greater advantage than if an adult had solved the problem by rigging up lighting apparatus and renting stage scenery and costumes.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Read in the text chapter xiv, "Costuming."

2. Dress a small doll so that it will represent one of the characters in your play. Use either related colors or contrasting colors in the costume.

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LESSON 7

COSTUMES

PURPOSE

1. To give a knowledge of the particular kind of costumes worn by characters in the Bible stories.

2. To train in the making and draping of these costumes.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach: Review of points in the preceding lesson, through an examination and discussion of the costume on the dolls brought in, according to the previous assignment

Presentation: Discussion based on chapter xiv in the text, "Costuming"

1. Descriptions and suggestions as to costumes for
   - *a*) Men
   - *b*) Women
   - *c*) Servants
   - *d*) Soldiers
2. Descriptions and suggestions as to
   - *a*) Headdresses
   - *b*) Sandals
   - *c*) Personal adornment

3. Descriptions and suggestions as to
   a) Armor
   b) Crowns
   c) Scepters
4. Descriptions and suggestions as to some of the simple properties needed

Application: Draping of sheets and large pieces of cloth upon members of the class to illustrate the kinds of costumes

APPROACH

(Place the dolls which have been brought in on a table in front of the class. Discuss each one using these questions: What color scheme was followed in this costume? Is it pleasing? Why?)

PRESENTATION AND APPLICATION

(The Presentation of this lesson is based upon information gained from the assignment in the text. In dramatizing stories other than biblical, one's approach should be the same as that suggested in this lesson. The present lesson will make specific reference to biblical costumes only.)

In order to discuss the costumes which we shall need in the various dramatizations, list in your notebooks the characters in your plays. (This may be done at this time.)

Question: How many have to plan costumes for men who lived among the early Hebrews?

(Call for a description of this costume. By way of illustrating the manner of draping the outer garment, drape a sheet or a large cloth on some member of the class. Bring

out the fact that it is possible to use small sheets for costumes on children.)

Question: How many have to plan costumes for servants?

(Call for a description of this costume.

In like manner call for descriptions of the costumes for women, for headdresses, for sandals, etc. Illustrate the draping of the different kinds of headdress, using a member of the class as a model. Discuss the personal adornment of men and women.)

Question: By what methods may you make this problem of costuming one for the children to solve?

(Allow the class to discuss this at length. Bring out the points that the leader of the group may arouse the interest of the children so that they will look for pictures and descriptions which will aid them. She may then supplement their knowledge with more detailed and correct information. The children may either make the simple slips for themselves or they may bring pieces of goods from home to be draped. The importance of making this matter of costuming a means for the further training of the children cannot be overemphasized.)

Question: Describe the armor and weapons of the soldiers; the crowns and scepters of kings.

(If possible have examples of many of these objects which have been constructed by children or by the teacher. Discuss the methods for making each one.)

Question: How would you teach children to construct these objects?

(Secure various opinions from the class. Suggest [1] holding special meetings of the children, at which all make weapons and armor; and [2] allowing each individual child who needs certain pieces to make them at home, according to his own ideas.

COSTUMES MADE AND DRAPED BY CHILDREN

Discuss methods of making any other properties or costumes on the class members' lists. Bring the lesson to a close by a discussion of the questions that follow.)

Question: How soon after beginning the dramatization of a story would you introduce the problem of costumes? Why?

Question: To what extent should the question of costumes enter into work with primary children? with junior children? with children of the intermediate age? with young people of the high-school age?

Question: What should determine the leader's choice of properties and costumes?

ASSIGNMENT

Have the class choose one of the following plays in the text: David, Ruth, Moses, Daniel, Esther. Assign the parts to members of the class and ask them to learn these by the next session. (This is done in order to have a working basis for the next lesson, and not in any sense for the purpose of presenting a play.)

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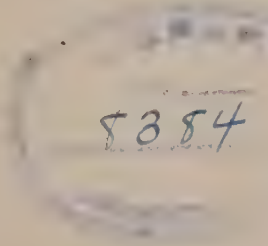

LESSON 8

DRAMATIZING A STORY

PURPOSE

1. To afford the opportunity for putting into practice many of the principles discussed in previous lessons.

2. To emphasize the importance of giving a correct portrayal of the customs and social organization of the people whose lives are being interpreted.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach:

1. Discussion in which the setting of the play is planned
2. Discussion of customs involved in the play

Presentation:

1. Acting out the story
2. Criticism from the group as to
   a) Oral expression
   b) Action
   c) Grouping
   d) Costuming

Application: Noting points for improvement in the work with the children

Approach

(Allow the class to plan the setting for the play, the parts of which were assigned in the last lesson: [1] Arrangement of properties on the stage, and [2] arrangement of entrances and exits.

Before any attempt is made to enact the play, a discussion should be held concerning the customs involved in the story. When dealing with children, a leader should give this necessary background before the story is told. Such customs as the manner of salutation, the manner of praying, kinds of bows, blessings, manner of taking an oath, etc., should be described in detail, and practiced by those who need to understand them. The importance of looking up data on these ancient customs should be emphasized. No teacher should attempt to tell a story to children unless she has a background of knowledge covering the customs and social organization of the people to be interpreted. Any good biblical encyclopedia will give this background. It is highly essential that children who are dramatizing the story of Abraham, for example, realize why Abraham lived in a tent, and that they have a correct mental picture of the kind of tent in which he lived. As the story is given to many children, Abraham's tent is visualized as an Indian wigwam! The oriental bow before one in authority is made in a certain manner which should be taught correctly; children should not be allowed to "courtesy" before the Pharaoh as they are taught in dancing school.)

Presentation

(Allow those who have parts in the dramatization to play through the first scene once without interruption. Members of the class who are not taking part should be ready to give constructive criticisms at the end of this scene. Such questions may be asked as the following:

What were the best parts about this scene? Why?

What suggestions have you for improving it?

Each scene should be enacted once, and tested by such questions as the above. During the second acting of the play ask the class to answer the following questions:

Was there improvement? Where?

Which scene has the most pleasing grouping? Why?

In which scene are the colors most pleasing? Why?

Which characters speak with the greatest clearness and force?

What is the weakest spot in the play?

After discussing these points have the play enacted the third time, in order to incorporate all constructive suggestions. Note the improvement at the end.)

APPLICATION

(Ask for brief reports from the workers with children's groups.)

In the light of the method we have just used, and the progress which you noted with each succeeding enactment of this play, list the weakest spots in your work with the children. Where do you think it most needs improving? How can you accomplish this?

(Allow a few minutes at the close of the period for these questions to be answered in writing.)

ASSIGNMENT

1. Try definitely to overcome the weak spots outlined today in your work.

2. Our next lesson will be a discussion of Bible material suitable for dramatization. Read in the

MANNER OF PRAYING

The central figure illustrates the manner of praying. The two kneeling figures illustrate the low bow

text chapter xi, "The Dramatic Qualities in a Good Story," and chapter xii, "Bible Stories Suitable for Dramatization."

3. On the basis of your reading, select all the possible stories from the biblical material which will be assigned you. Bring this list to the next class session. (Give each student one of the following assignments: Genesis 11–50, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, Daniel, The Minor Prophets, Job, Stories about Jesus, Parables, Acts. This list may of course be abbreviated or lengthened according to the size of the class.)

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LESSON 9

BIBLICAL MATERIAL SUITABLE FOR DRAMATIZATION

PURPOSE

1. To give a basis (*a*) for selecting suitable material for dramatization, and (*b*) for changing and adapting stories and incidents in order to make them suitable.

2. To furnish a list of possible biblical material which may be used for dramatization.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach: Discussion of the essential qualities to be found in a story which may be dramatized

Presentation and Application: Listing biblical material which may be used for dramatization

APPROACH

In our first lesson we discussed very briefly some of the qualities essential to a good story. Chapter xi of the text, "The Dramatic Qualities in a Good Story," which you have read as the assignment, enlarged upon our first discussion. Let us list these qualities. (As each one is listed on the blackboard, ask for examples which illustrate that specific quality.)

Each story must have:

1. Activity.
2. A succession of events.
3. A basic structure: general setting, climax, satisfactory ending.
4. Moral soundness.
5. Content within the experience of the children who dramatize it.

(Call attention to the difference between "a succession of events" and "a basic structure." Both qualities are essential. It is often the case that a "succession of events" is mistaken for a "basic structure," and the resulting dramatization is nothing more than a series of unrelated scenes. The life of Abraham, for example, may be set forth in scene after scene, and the impression given is that of unrelated pictures. If, however, there is the beginning of a problem or plot in the first scene which works out more and more completely as the play develops, until there is a climax of events, and the final scene brings the satisfaction of knowing that the problem set forth is completed, the play may then be said to have a basic structure.

The teacher should have the story organized most carefully before she begins to tell it. The children can readily determine the acts of the play according to the large movements in the story, which indicate lapse of time or change of place. The scenes within each act may be determined according to the subdivisions, or the smaller incidents, of these large movements. There is no arbitrary rule for an essential number of acts and scenes in any play. Many good plays have from three to five acts, but there need be no fixed number of acts to a well-constructed play. A one-act play should have all of the essential parts in the

one scene. As an example of this, note the play of "Abraham and the Three Guests," chapter viii in the text.)

Question: Under what conditions is it well to dramatize freely and spontaneously incidents which in no sense have a story structure?

(This is desirable when there is not time for extensive work on the story, or when "playing it through" once or twice gives the experience which the children need.)

In this course we are dealing particularly with Bible stories, but it should be borne in mind that the principles here noted are as truly applicable to missionary stories, folk tales, historical incidents, and other stories.

PRESENTATION AND APPLICATION

Question: Why is it undesirable to take the majority of stories from the Bible exactly as they are given?

(For this discussion the assignment in the text will prove helpful.

Call for lists of stories prepared, as assigned at the last session, and discuss each selection on the basis of the points noted in the Approach.)

When there are many stories and incidents concerning one character, group them in cycles, e.g., the Abraham cycle, the Isaac cycle, the Joseph cycle, the Moses cycle, etc.

(In discussing the stories of the life of Jesus, bring out the fact that it is possible to dramatize many stories and incidents *about* his life and work which do not bring him into the scene directly. An excellent example is to be found in the dramatization "The Rock" in *The Church School* for October, 1921.

By the end of the period a full and suggestive list of material should have been made. The teacher may supplement from the list of stories given below. It may be desirable to have typewritten lists made so that each member of the class may possess a copy.)

BIBLICAL MATERIAL SUITABLE FOR DRAMATIZATION

1. Abraham's Journey into Canaan: Gen. 11, 12
2. Abraham and Lot: The Division of the Land: Gen. 13
3. Abraham and the Three Guests: Gen. 18
4. The Sacrifice of Isaac: Gen. 22
5. Isaac and Rebekah: Gen. 24
6. Jacob's Meeting with Esau: Gen. 33
7. The Story of Joseph: Gen. 37–50
8. The Childhood of Moses: Exod. 2
9. Moses in the Land of Midian: Exod. 3, 4
10. The Meeting of Moses and Aaron: Exod. 4
11. Pharaoh the Unjust: Moses Pleads for His People: Exod. 5–11
12. The Passover: The Exodus: Exod. 13, 14
13. Moses and the Commandments: Exod. 19, 20, 32–34
14. The Sending of the Spies: Num. 13, 14; Deut. 1: 22–40
15. Moses Chooses Joshua: Deut. 31–34
16. Rahab and the Spies: Josh. 2
17. The Taking of Jericho: Josh. 6
18. Joshua and the Gibeonites: Josh. 9
19. Joshua's Farewell Address: Josh. 23, 24
20. Gideon: Judg. 6, 7
21. The Story of Ruth: Ruth

22. The Childhood of Samuel: I Sam. 1–3
23. The Request for a King: The Anointing of Saul: I Sam. 8–10
24. Samuel Anoints David: I Sam. 16
25. David and Goliath: I Sam. 17
26. David and Jonathan: I Sam. 18–20
27. David Spares Saul's Life: I Sam. 24
28. David Spares Saul's Life: I Sam. 26
29. David's Kindness to Mephibosheth: II Sam. 9
30. Water from the Well at Bethlehem: II Sam. 23: 13–18
31. Nathan and Bathsheba before David: I Kings 1
32. Solomon Anointed King: I Kings 1
33. David's Charge to Solomon: I Kings 2
34. Solomon Sends Messengers to Hiram: I Kings 5
35. The Dedication of the Temple: I Kings 8
36. Solomon and the Queen of Sheba: I Kings 10
37. Abijah and Jeroboam: I Kings 11
38. Division of the Kingdom: I Kings 12

39. Elijah and the Widow's Meal: I Kings 17
40. Elijah and the Prophets of Baal: I Kings 18
41. Elijah and Elisha: II Kings 2
42. Elisha and the Widow's Oil: II Kings 4
43. Elisha and the Shunammite: II Kings 4, 8
44. Elisha and Naaman: II Kings 5
45. Elisha and the King of Syria: II Kings 6

46. Nehemiah
47. Esther
48. Job
49. Amos
50. Jeremiah

51. Daniel Refuses the King's Food: Dan. 1
52. Daniel Interprets the King's Dream: Dan. 2

53. The Fiery Furnace: Dan. 3
54. The Writing on the Wall: Dan. 5
55. Daniel in the Lion's Den: Dan. 6

PARABLES

56. The Lost Sheep: Matt. 18
57. The Unmerciful Servant: Matt. 18
58. The Two Sons: Matt. 21
59. The Ten Virgins: Matt. 25
60. The Talents: Matt. 25
61. The Good Samaritan: Luke 10
62. The Friend at Night: Luke 11
63. The Rich Fool: Luke 12
64. The Wedding Feast: Luke 14
65. The Lost Coin: Luke 15
66. The Prodigal Son: Luke 15
67. The Unrighteous Steward: Luke 16
68. The Pharisee and the Publican: Luke 18
69. The Pounds: Luke 19
70. The Husbandman: Luke 20

STORIES ABOUT JESUS

71. Jesus Blessing the Children: Matt. 19
72. Feeding the Five Thousand: Matt. 14
73. Mary and Martha: Luke 10
74. Peter's Denial: Luke 22
75. John the Baptist: Luke 3
76. Jesus Calling the Disciples: Matt. 4:18–22; 9:9–13; 10:1–4
77. The Arrest of Peter and John: Acts 3, 5
78. Stephen: Acts 6, 7
79. Philip and the Ethiopian Treasurer: Acts 8
80. The Story of Cornelius: Acts 10
81. Paul and Silas in Prison: Acts 16

82. Paul at Ephesus: Acts 19
83. Paul and the Temple Mob: Acts 21, 22

ASSIGNMENT

1. Try to have your play ready for presentation before the class after the next session.

2. Make a list of all the results which you hope to have accomplished with the children in your group through your work in dramatization.

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LESSON 10

RESULTS OF USING DRAMATIZATION AS A METHOD

PURPOSE

1. To emphasize the importance of keeping in mind definite standards of attainment.
2. To formulate these standards.

BRIEF OUTLINE

Approach: Discussion of the relation of standards of attainment to the final results of the work

Presentation: Listing standards of attainment as influenced by

1. The process of dramatization
2. The subject-matter dramatized

Application: Testing work with children according to these standards

APPROACH

Question: What do you conceive to be the definite outcomes of your work with the children?

(Discuss this question in connection with the written reports to be brought in at this session.)

Question: Why have your results differed?

(Secure point of view of the class, and summarize somewhat as follows: There are never any important values or outcomes unless the teacher has in mind from the first

what she hopes to accomplish. There should be certain very definite standards of attainment of which she is conscious at the beginning of her work, and which she is striving to attain at every meeting with the children. This does not mean that the results secured through the dramatic method are to be fixed or stereotyped, but it does mean that children develop more surely along every possible line if the teacher has definite motives behind her work. *Any* teacher is able to lead children in dramatization. The children themselves are so full of the dramatic or play impulse that they will often carry the work through, whether the teacher guides or not. It is only the *trained* and *far-seeing* leader, however, who is able to use dramatization as a method for accomplishing the greatest development possible.)

PRESENTATION AND APPLICATION

(The following discussion may be developed from the class, and the points noted on the blackboard.)

Upon analyzing the results secured, we note that two factors have been at work:

1. The *process* of dramatization itself may be a large factor in securing certain results.

2. The *subject-matter* dramatized is an important influence.

Each of these factors has a part in producing (*a*) certain qualities of character-building; (*b*) mental training; (*c*) aesthetic development; (*d*) development of the religious consciousness.

THE PROCESS OF DRAMATIZATION

(Discuss in detail each of the following results, and if possible secure illustrations from the class.)

The actual process, or method of dramatization, develops character-building qualities, such as:

1. The ability to work harmoniously with the group.
2. Respect for the rights of others.
3. Appreciation of honest effort in others.
4. Self-confidence.
5. The overcoming of self-consciousness.
6. Self-control.

The process of dramatization aids in mental training along such lines as:

1. The power to speak before an audience with force and clearness.
2. Habits of concentration.
3. Resourcefulness and initiative.
4. The creative impulse.

The process of dramatization promotes the aesthetic interest in the appreciation and enjoyment of beauty of arrangement and of color.

THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF DRAMATIZATION

The subject-matter employed:

1. Tends to develop character-building qualities through contact with the lives of the characters in the stories.
2. Aids in mental training through the actual memory work and the intelligent understanding of the dramatization.

3. Increases the aesthetic interest through the beauty and majesty of the biblical language which is memorized, as well as through the poetry of the story itself.

Along with growth in these other lines comes the development of the religious consciousness. This is often intangible, but it is none the less real; and it is indicated in many phases of the work. Through reliving forms of worship and the lives of a people who were truly religious and had the idea of God so highly developed, children form habits of worship and begin to develop a religious feeling of their own. The teacher who keeps this development of the religious consciousness always before her is sure to secure the reverent spirit which should pervade the dramatization of every Bible story.

(After this last session some arrangement should be made for the class to see each of the children's plays. See Appendix A for examples of children's plays directed by students taking this course.)

APPENDIX A

The two following plays, *The Half-Bagani* and *The Baby Moses*, are given here as examples of what was actually accomplished by students who were enroled in this course, and who did the required practice work. In both cases the method employed was that described in this book.

The Half-Bagani is a simple foreign missionary incident that was dramatized by the boys of the junior department of the church school (United Church, Oberlin, Ohio). This piece of work was directed by a young man from the training class. It is interesting to compare this dramatization with that done by groups of girls of the same age. The exceeding brevity of the scenes, the scarcity of words, and the directness of action are characteristic of boys. There is no unnecessary word or action; everything said and done is directly to the point. Perhaps if a woman had led this group of boys she would not have allowed the result to remain so characteristically masculine.

As an example of a home missionary story dramatized by a group of junior girls, under the guidance of two young women in this same training class, see Study 7 in *World-Friendship through the Church School*, by J. L. Lobingier.

The dramatization of *The Baby Moses* was the result of the practice work of a young woman with a group of junior girls (United Church, Oberlin, Ohio). This is an unusually popular story for dramatization, because of its simplicity and dramatic interest. It is interesting to compare the interpretation of this story by this group of girls with that given in chapter v of the text used throughout this course.

THE STORY OF THE "HALF-BAGANI" IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS[1]

A TRUE INCIDENT

(A "Half-Bagani" is a Philippino who has killed several men. His regulation costume is a red jacket, white embroidered trousers, and an embroidered handkerchief for a head dress. When he has killed his *ten* men, he will become a full Bagani and be entitled to a jacket and trousers both of red.)

A Missionary who taught in a Boy's School in the Philippine Islands had one pupil, Apin, who was very bright and winning.

Black smallpox, or the "Devil's Breath," broke out and the Missionary had to visit the sick day and night.

One very dark night he had to cross a lonely stretch of country. When he had nearly reached the end of this unusually lonely place, he heard a slight crackling of underbrush, and before he could think, a native rushed out, dressed in the regulation Half-Bagani costume.

It was Apin, his own pupil, grinning and showing his "blackened" teeth. He meant to kill the Missionary,

[1] From *Everyland*, April, 1920. Reprinted by permission.

JUNIOR GIRLS IN A HOME MISSIONARY PLAY

his teacher! but the Missionary had practised jiu jitsu at college and he was quick. Before Apin could strike, he was lying flat on the ground with a big bruise on his forehead. The Missionary, glad to end this unpleasant affair, rapidly went on his way.

Next day he was called to the bedside of Apin, the Half-Bagani, who had been struck down with the "Devil's Breath." Of course the Missionary gave him every care and kindness. He was so ill that the Missionary didn't dare leave the house during his delirium, but stayed up all night with him.

When Apin came to himself, he saw the Missionary bending over him, and when at last he got well, he was ashamed and followed the Missionary back to the village. They passed through the same lonely forest, where he had attacked him before his illness, and Apin watched the Missionary very closely; but the Missionary did not show any fear or once look around to see if the Half-Bagani intended to attack him again.

Apin's admiration was unbounded for the Missionary's courage and faith, and after that day he constantly followed the Missionary, and was untiring in his efforts to help him in all his work.

One very hot day, the Missionary found Apin sitting over a blazing fire in the forest. "Why are you doing this?" he asked. Apin pointed to a bundle of clothing. "I am burning up my Half-Bagani suit," he said.

CORA BANKS PIERCE, *Missionary*

THE HALF-BAGANI

(*As Dramatized by Junior Boys*)

PLACE: The Philippine Islands.

CHARACTERS: The Missionary, Apin, Carlos, Juan, Masa, Natives.

SCENE I. THE SCHOOLROOM

Missionary: Good morning, boys. I hope that you are all well today.

Class: Good morning, teacher!

Missionary: Let us begin with our geography lesson. Are there any questions?

Juan: What is snow, and did you have it where you lived?

Missionary: You do not have snow here, do you? Over where I lived in Ohio, the weather gets so cold in the fall that we have to have fires in order to keep warm. The moisture that comes down from the clouds is frozen and makes beautiful white snowflakes which cover the ground. Sometimes, if it is not too cold, the snow sticks to the trees and houses and turns them all white.

[CARLOS *gets up, chokes, and falls moaning.*]

What is the trouble?

Class: [*All run about and shout.*] He has the "Devil's Breath"!

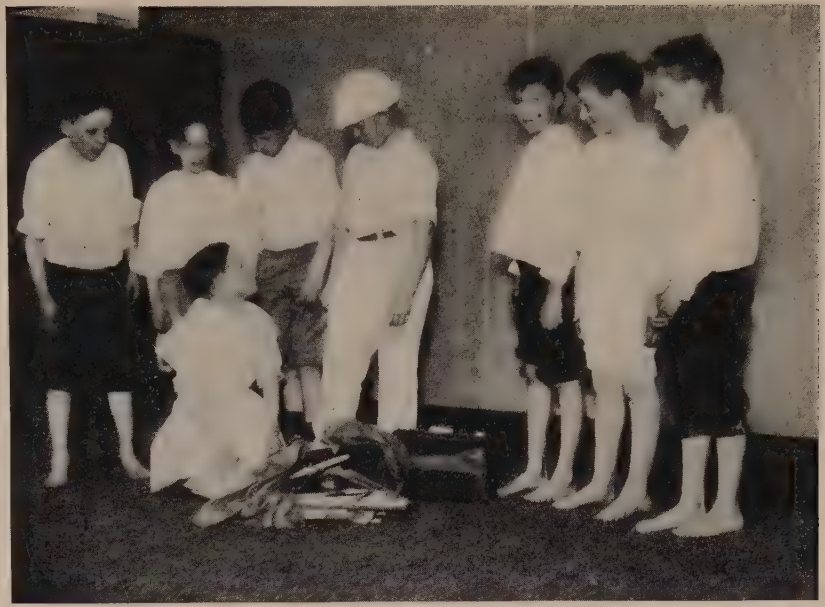
[*The* MISSIONARY *cares for him.*]

Juan [*or any one of the boys*]: Missionary, there are many sick on the other side of the forest. They need you.

Missionary: Carlos is resting well now. I will go to the others and come back here tomorrow.

SCENE II. THE FOREST

Apin [*enters stealthily, sneaking and skulking behind the trees*]: I have killed nine men. [*He counts on his fingers.*] Yes, four and five make nine. When I have killed one more I will be a Full-Bagani. Then I can wear the long red trousers, the red coat, and the white embroidered cap. Won't I look fine, and will not all of my friends be proud of me! Ah! Here comes the Missionary. . . . . I'll kill him! [*He crouches behind a tree.*]



APIN BURNS HIS HALF-BAGANI SUIT

Missionary [*enters*]: Surely I am tired, but I must keep up as there is so much sickness; I must do all I can to help these poor people.

[APIN *attacks the* MISSIONARY *and is tripped and thrown down. The* MISSIONARY *stoops and examines him.*]

Missionary: He is just stunned . . . . poor fellow! When will these people get over their foolish superstitions! He will be all right soon . . . . and I must hasten on to those who are sick.

SCENE III. APIN'S HUT AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST

[APIN *is ill and is tossing on his couch.* JUAN *enters, but when he sees that* APIN *is sick he is ready to run out.*]

Juan: He has the "Devil's Breath"! I must go for the Missionary!

[*He goes out and returns soon followed by the* MISSIONARY.]

Missionary [*stays with* APIN *and cures him*]: Now you are all well, and we may go back to the school.

[*He goes out followed by the natives.*]

SCENE IV. THE FOREST

[APIN *is hiding behind the trees as before. The* MISSIONARY *walks in front of him, looking steadily before him.*]

Apin: I wonder if he will look around. My, but he is a brave man! Even after I tried to kill him, he stayed with me when I had the "Devil's Breath," and all of the rest had run away. I owe my very life to him! I will follow him and go to school.

SCENE V. ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

[APIN *is burning his Half-Bagani suit. The* MISSIONARY *enters.*]

Missionary: What are you burning your Half-Bagani suit for, Apin?

Apin: I am burning my Half-Bagani suit because it is not worth while to try to be a Full-Bagani. You have taught me what it is to be brave and unselfish. I am going to school and try to learn to be a Missionary so that I can go over the mountains and help the people over there as you have helped us here.

Missionary: God bless you, Apin!

THE BABY MOSES

(*As Dramatized by Junior Girls*)

SCENE I

PLACE: The home of baby Moses: a Hebrew home in Egypt.

CHARACTERS: The Mother, Miriam, Aaron, Baby, Visitor.

[*The* MOTHER *is rocking the baby and singing to it. Little* AARON *is playing on the floor.* MIRIAM *enters.*]

Miriam: O Mother! Dost thou hear those cries without? They sound like babies' cries! Can it be that the soldiers have found our neighbors' babies and that they are killing them?

Mother: No, my daughter Miriam, I hear no cries. Surely thou art mistaken. Oh, this cruel law must not touch our baby! My heart is sore troubled; for these three

months we have hidden our baby and no soldiers have come nigh unto this house. But now his cries are so loud that I fear they will hear him. What shall we do!

Miriam: Yes, Mother, we must do something! I believe the soldiers are not far away.

[*Enter woman hurriedly.*]

Woman: Dost thou not know? Hide thy baby quickly!

Mother [*rising in haste*]: What art thou saying? What dost thou mean?

Woman: Make haste! The soldiers are in thy neighbors' house! They have killed their baby! Take your baby to the river and hide him there. May the Lord bless you! [*She goes out.*]

Mother: O Miriam, Miriam, what shall we do?

Miriam: Haste, Mother! The woman speaketh well! Let us run to the river!

Mother: We will make a basket of bulrushes and daub it with slime and pitch, and put our baby boy into it. Then we will hide it in the flags by the river's brink.

Aaron: I will watch the baby, Mother, while thou makest the basket!

Mother: God will take care of our little boy. [*They all go out of the room in haste.*]

SCENE II

PLACE: At the river's brink.

CHARACTERS: The Mother, Miriam, Aaron, Baby, Soldiers, Maidens, the Princess.

[*The* MOTHER *is standing with the basket in her arms.* MIRIAM *and* AARON *are helping her find a good place to hide it.*]

Miriam: This seemeth a good place, Mother. Bring the basket here.

Mother [*putting the basket down*]: I will leave thee now, my little baby, but thy sister Miriam will stay close by to watch thee. My daughter, hide thou behind that tree and watch. Come Aaron, we must depart. [*They leave.*]

[*Enter two soldiers. They walk across the stage. Enter two maidens followed by the* PRINCESS. *Other maidens enter.*]

First Maiden: This place seemeth good for thy bath, Princess.

Princess [*looking around*]: What is it that I see yonder in the flags? Bring it hither.

Second Maiden [*brings basket. The* PRINCESS *removes the cover, and all watch. The baby cries.*]: It is a baby, O Princess.

Princess: A baby! This is a little Hebrew boy! His Mother must have hidden him here to save his life from my Father's cruel law.

First Maiden: What wilt thou do with him, Princess?

[MIRIAM *runs up to them.*]

Miriam: Great Princess, shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women for this baby?

Princess: Go, child, and fetch me a nurse from thy people. [MIRIAM *runs to obey.*] How cruel of my Father to kill these babies! This Hebrew woman shall not lose her baby, for I will save his life. He is my baby; I will call his name Moses, for I drew him from the water.

[MIRIAM *comes back with her* MOTHER.]

Miriam: Princess, this is the woman that I have brought unto thee.

Princess: Woman, take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will pay thee wages.

Mother: I will gladly do as thou dost bid me, O great Princess!

[MOTHER *and* MIRIAM *leave. The* PRINCESS *and her maidens follow, and the soldiers pass last.*]

SCENE III

PLACE: The same as scene i.

CHARACTERS: The same as those in scene i.

[*The* MOTHER *is rocking and singing to her baby.*]

Miriam: Our little Moses is wonderfully sweet. He bringeth us great joy.

[*Visitor enters.*]

Visitor [*in a surprised voice*]: Hast thou not hidden thy baby? Dost thou not fear that the soldiers will hear him?

Mother: Nay, we have no fear. God has saved our baby.

Visitor: What dost thou mean?

Mother: We took our baby unto the river's brink, as thou said unto us. And the Princess, even Pharaoh's daughter, came there for her bath.

Miriam [*interrupting*]: And I hid near by and watched her find our baby.

Visitor: The Princess! Can it be!

Mother: And Miriam ran unto the Princess, and offered to bring a nurse, and she ran and brought me unto the Princess. And the Princess was pleased and gave me my baby to care for.

Visitor: God hath greatly blessed thee indeed, and I rejoice with thee.

Mother: Yea, our hearts are thankful unto the Lord, our God.

APPENDIX B

The dramatization of *Isaac and Rebekah* as it is given here is the work of intermediate girls of United Church, Oberlin, Ohio. Under the direction of the writer, this was accomplished as one of the projects during the week-day meetings of the group.

This dramatization represents the finished product which may be expected from children of the junior high-school age.

THE DRAMATIZATION OF *ISAAC AND REBEKAH*[1]

ACT I

PLACE: Abraham's tent in Canaan.

CHARACTERS: Abraham, Isaac, Trusted Servant, Servants.

[ABRAHAM *is seated near the center of the stage on many elaborate and rich cushions. Two servants stand behind, ready to fan him. A group of men servants stand at* ABRAHAM'S *right, toward the back of the stage; a similar group stands at his left. There are groups of women seated at the front of the stage, toward the right and left sides, weaving, grinding corn, and making clay vessels.* ABRAHAM *is in deep thought.*]

Abraham [*to servant*]: Go! Bid my son Isaac come hither. I would speak with him. [*Servant bows and*

[1] From an article by the author. Reprinted by permission of *The Church School.*

leaves tent.] I am old and well-stricken in age; and Jehovah hath blessed me in all things. Now before I die may I see my son Isaac with a wife chosen from among mine own people. I will send my trusted servant, the elder of my house, unto the land of Mesopotamia, where my kindred dwell, that he may take a wife for my son.

[*Enter* ISAAC. *He bows before his father.*]

Abraham: Come hither, my son, I would speak with thee.

Isaac: What is thy will, my father?

Abraham: My son, I am growing old, and though I am rich and greatly blessed by Jehovah, I have yet one desire to be fulfilled. It is fitting that thou shouldst take unto thyself a wife. Dost thou not think so, my son?

Isaac: Whatsoever thou thinkest pleaseth me, my father.

Abraham: It is well. My wish is that thou shalt take a maiden from among mine own kinsmen in far away Mesopotamia, and not from this land of Canaan. I will send my servant back unto mine own country to find a wife for thee.

Isaac: Thou sayest well, my father; this seemeth good unto me.

Abraham [*to servant*]: Send my servant, the elder of my house, to me. [*Servant bows and goes out.*] [*To* ISAAC]: This will bring great joy to me before I die, oh my son.

[*Enter* TRUSTED SERVANT. *He bows low.*]

Abraham: I have sent for thee, my Trusted Servant, that thou mayest swear unto me that thou wilt faithfully fulfil the mission upon which I shall send thee. Take thine oath before me, I pray thee, and I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the God of Heaven and the God of earth, that thou wilt not take a wife for my son from the daughters of

the Canaanites among whom I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my country and among my kindred and take a wife for my son Isaac.

Trusted Servant: My great master, peradventure the maiden will not be willing to follow me unto this land; must I then take thy son back unto the land from whence thou camest?

Abraham [*rises in great excitement*]: Beware that thou bring not my son unto that land again! Jehovah the God of Heaven who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my birth, and who gave me this land, he will send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife for my son from thence. And if the maiden be not willing to follow thee, then shalt thou be clear from this my oath; but thou shalt not take my son there. [TRUSTED SERVANT *raises his hands to heaven and swears.*]

Trusted Servant: O great master, Abraham, I do swear unto thee that with the help of Jehovah I will do that which thou hast said.

Abraham: See now that all is made ready for this journey! [*To one servant*]: Choose thou ten camels, strong and well! [*To another servant*]: Prepare rich gifts for my kinspeople; gold and silver, a ring, and two bracelets for the maiden, that my people may know of my great wealth. [*To women*]: Ye women grinding corn, come hither; make ready much food for these men to take on this journey across the desert; wheat-cakes and cheeses, dried milk and dates. Ye women weaving, come hither! Make ready rich robes for my kinsfolk. Ye women with the clay, see that water is ready for the journey on the morrow. [*As the servants are addressed, they bow and leave the stage.* ABRAHAM *steps toward the* TRUSTED SERVANT *and raises his hands to bless him.*] May Jehovah, the God of Heaven and the God of earth be with thee on this journey, and prosper thee,

THE TRUSTED SERVANT TAKES HIS OATH BEFORE ABRAHAM

and bring thee again speedily unto my tent. [TRUSTED SERVANT *bows and goes out.* ABRAHAM *leans on* ISAAC, *and together they walk out. The two servants with fans follow.*]

ACT II

SCENE I

PLACE: Mesopotamia. At the well by the city gate.

CHARACTERS: Trusted Servant, Camel Men, Rebekah, Women.

[*A woman comes to the well and fills her jug with water. As she returns to the city gate the* TRUSTED SERVANT *and the camel men enter; they fall wearily on the ground. Two more women come to the well; they see the strangers and talk together.*]

Trusted Servant: At last our journey is ended! I am thirsty and very weary. Are ye not also very tired?

Men: Yea, master, we are tired.

[*The maidens approach the well and draw water.*]

First Maiden: Dost thou know who these men are?

Second Maiden: Nay, I know not; but this I do know: they must have come from a far country, for they look hot and tired.

[*Enter third maiden.*]

First Maiden [*to third maiden*]: Behold, here are strangers! Hast thou heard whence they came?

Third Maiden: Nay, I know not. But surely we shall hear in the village to-night; let us hasten! [*The three maidens walk off with their water-jugs. They look back at the strangers as they go.*]

Trusted Servant [*rising and walking toward the well*]: How shall I know which maiden is the right one for my master's son's wife! Jehovah is my guide; he will tell me. [*Lifts his hands in prayer.*] O Jehovah, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray thee, good speed this

day; and show kindness unto my master Abraham! Behold, I am standing at the fountain of water; and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; and let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say, "Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink," and she shall say, "Drink, my lord, and I will give thy camels drink also," let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master.

[*Enter* REBEKAH *with her water-jug. As she finishes filling the jug, the* TRUSTED SERVANT *runs to meet her, and falls on the ground before her.*]

Trusted Servant: Give me to drink, I pray thee, a little water from thy pitcher.

Rebekah: Drink, my lord. [*She lets down her pitcher and gives him a drink.*] I will draw for thy camels also until they have done drinking.

Trusted Servant: Praise be unto Jehovah who hath done this thing! Damsel, whose daughter art thou? Tell me, I pray thee.

Rebekah: I am the daughter of Bethuel, of the house of Nahor. My name is Rebekah.

Trusted Servant: Thanks be unto Jehovah! I have come with a message from thy kinsman, Abraham. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

Rebekah: From our long-lost kinsman, Abraham! We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

Trusted Servant: Bring forth the gifts! [*Men come with the gifts. The* TRUSTED SERVANT *puts the bracelets on* REBEKAH.]

Rebekah: I will run with this great news to my father! Follow me into the city.

Trusted Servant: Follow with the camels, my men. Blessed be Jehovah, the God of my master, Abraham, who hath not forsaken his loving kindness and his truth toward my master; as for me, Jehovah hath led me in the way to the house of my master's brethren!

SCENE II

PLACE: Mesopotamia. The home of Rebekah.

CHARACTERS: Rebekah, Bethuel, Rebekah's Mother, Laban, Trusted Servant, Camel Men, Women Servants.

[REBEKAH'S MOTHER *and servants are preparing the evening meal.* LABAN *is sitting in the room waiting for his food.*]

Laban: Hast thou prepared the food yet, Mother? I would eat.

Mother: We wait for Rebekah, my son; she hath gone for the water.

Laban: Rebekah tarries long at the well. I will go to meet her.

[*Enter* REBEKAH *in great haste. She holds out her arms to show the new gifts.*]

Rebekah: Mother, Mother! A wonderful thing has come to pass! Behold these gifts!

Mother [*looking at the bracelets*]: What meaneth this? Speak.

Rebekah: I have news,—great news!

[*Enter* BETHUEL, REBEKAH'S *father. All bow to him.*]

Bethuel: Rebekah, my daughter, what is this thing that hath come to pass?

Rebekah: O my Father, a man was at the well, and he spake unto me. And he said that he had come from a far country, from our long-lost kinsman, Abraham.

All: From Abraham! Our kinsman, Abraham! What said he unto thee?

Laban: Where is this man?

Rebekah: He gave me these bracelets, and he said that he bringeth a message from Abraham. He hath camels and men with him, and he desireth a room in our house for the night. He cometh now unto this house.

Bethuel: Laban, my son, go thou to meet this man!

Laban: I will go, my Father. [*He goes out.*]

Bethuel: Prepare a feast for these messengers from my kinsman. They must be weary and faint from their long journey. Prepare water for the hands and feet of these strangers! [*All bow and go to do his bidding. Women with water and towel stand at the door ready to receive the guests. Enter* TRUSTED SERVANT, *followed by camel men. They wash their hands as they enter.* BETHUEL *meets them in the middle of the room. The strangers bow to the floor.*] Come in, thou blessed of Jehovah, for I have prepared the house and room for the camels.

Trusted Servant: May Jehovah be praised; he hath led me to my master Abraham's kinsman.

Bethuel: Bring forth the food; these men must be weary!

Trusted Servant: I will not eat until I have told mine errand!

Bethuel: Speak on!

Trusted Servant: I am Abraham's servant, and Jehovah hath blessed my master greatly. And he hath become great; and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and man-servants and maid-servants, and camels and asses. And my master hath a son, Isaac, and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, "Thou shalt not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my Father's house and to my kindred,

and take a wife for my son." And I came this day unto the fountain by the city gate, and I did pray unto Jehovah to show me the maiden for my master's son's wife. And before I had done speaking in my heart Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder. And I asked her, "Whose daughter art thou?" And she said, "I am Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, of the house of Nahor." And I bowed my head and worshipped Jehovah, who had led me in the right way. And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.

Bethuel: This thing proceedeth from Jehovah. We cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee; take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as Jehovah hath spoken.

Trusted Servant: Blessed be Jehovah! Bring forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and give them unto Rebekah. [*Servants bring the gifts. They are given to* BETHUEL, LABAN, *the* MOTHER, *and* REBEKAH.]

Bethuel: Let the feast be served. [*Women serve the feast. The men sit in a semicircle on the floor, while the women pass food to them.*] How fared thee on thy journey?

Trusted Servant: The sand was hot, and the way was long; my men are weary.

[*They rise after eating.*]

Trusted Servant: I must start on the morrow for my master's tent. See that the damsel be ready to depart with me.

Laban: Let the damsel abide with us for a few days.

Mother: At least ten! After that she shall go.

Trusted Servant: Hinder me not, seeing that Jehovah hath prospered my way. Send me away, that I may go to my master.

Bethuel: We will call the damsel and inquire of her. Rebekah, wilt thou go with this man?

Rebekah: I will go, my Father.

Bethuel [*blessing* REBEKAH]: May Jehovah bless thee, my daughter, and prosper thee on this thy journey.

ACT III

PLACE: Canaan.

CHARACTERS: Isaac, Abraham, Rebekah, Trusted Servant, Servants.

[ISAAC *walks alone in the fields at eventide. He looks frequently toward the desert.*]

Isaac: Behold! There are camels in the desert! They seem to be coming toward me. Can it be my Father's servant with the damsel? I have waited, lo, these many days, and they come not. [*He looks again.*] Yea, surely those are my Father's camels! And it seemeth to me that I see the maiden. She hath alighted from her camel, and cometh hither. I will bring my Father to meet her. [*He goes out. Enter* REBEKAH *and servant, followed by the camel men.*]

Rebekah: What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?

Trusted Servant: It is my master! [REBEKAH *pulls down her veil.* ISAAC *comes toward them. They all bow.*] O master, this is the maiden that I have brought unto thee from thy Father's people. She is Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. Take her unto thy Father, Abraham, for his blessing.

[*Enter* ABRAHAM. TRUSTED SERVANT *goes to meet him.*]

Isaac: Praise be unto Jehovah who hath given me Rebekah for my wife! I have waited long for thee, fair maiden, and it causeth me great joy because thou hast

come at last. Behold, here is my Father, let us go to him. [ABRAHAM *comes toward them. All bow.*]

Abraham: Thou art welcome, Rebekah, my kinswoman! I do gladly take thee as my son's wife. [*To the* TRUSTED SERVANT]: Thou hast done well, my good and trusted servant; thou hast brought to pass the thing that I desired most in my old age. Thou hast fulfilled well thine oath. May Jehovah bless thee! [*Turning to* ISAAC *and* REBEKAH]: And now, my children, may Jehovah, the God of Heaven and the God of earth, keep you and prosper you, and abide with you, for ever and ever! Amen!

INDEX

Abraham, 8, 53, 57, 59, 76–79, 84–85
Action, 8, 34
Aesthetic interest, 41, 66
Aim: in educational dramatics, 7, 18–19; of the course, 3
Armor, the making of, 50
Arrangement of groups, 30–31

Balance, 31, 35
Beauty, the elements of, 32, 39
Beginners, dramatic work for, 13, 15
Biblical material suitable for dramatization, 56–62
Blocking out the story, 17–20
Boy with loaves and fishes, 9

Center of interest, 33
Character-building qualities, 60, 65
Characters, the choice of, 24
Children's day, 5
Christmas, 5
Church school, the, 1, 3
Church School, The, 58, 76
Color: psychological effect of, 45; the use of, 39–47
Color harmony, 44
Color opposites, 43
Color schemes, 44–45
Colors: analogous, 44; complementary, 43; contrasting, 44; dominant, 44; full intensity of, 43; neutral, 43; related, 44
Composition, 34
Concentration, habits of, 65
Contrasts of shapes and masses, 35
Costumes, 25, 48–51
Criticism by children, 23–24
Criticisms, constructive, 53–54
Customs, 52–53
Cycles of stories, 58–60

Dolls in costume, 47–48
Dramatic method, 1
Dramatics: formal, 5–7; informal, 6–7
Dramatization: the process of, 64–65; the subject-matter of, 65–66
Dramatizing a story, 52–55

Educational dramatics, 3–10; description of, 6–7
Elijah and the Widow's Meal, 19, 26–28
Enunciation, 25
Everyland, 68

Facing the audience, 36
First-grade children, dramatic work for, 15
Folk tales, 58

Gestures, 35, 36
Good Samaritan, the, 8
Great Feast, the, 14
Group criticism, 23–24
Grouping, 30–38
Groups on the stage, 34–35

Half-Bagani, The: the dramatization of, 69–71; the story of, 68–69
High-school pupils, dramatic work for, 13

Incidents, 8, 14
Initiative, 65
Intermediate age. *See* Junior high school age
Isaac and Rebekah, the dramatization of, 76–85

Jacob, 8
Jehovah, 77–85
Jesus, 58
Joseph, 6, 8, 37
Junior age: dramatic work for, 13; a play suitable for boys of, 68–71; a play suitable for girls of, 72–75
Junior high school age, 13; a play suitable for, 76–85

Kindergarten. *See* Beginners

Laboratory work, 2
Lesson plans, 2
Lighting, colored, 46

Magazines, 3
Masses in a composition, 34–35
Mechanical devices, 36
Mental pictures, 53
Method of procedure, 11–15, 18
Missionary dramatization, 58, 67, 69–71
Moses, the dramatization of, 72–75

Oriental bow, 53

Pauses, the value of, 37
Permanent form of the play, 23
Philippine Islands, 68
Pictures, the use of, 33–34, 50
Pigments, 45
Pitch of voice, 25
Play, a composite, 25–28
Plays, children's, 67–85
Primary children, dramatic work for, 13–15
Principles of composition, 30–36
Process of dramatization, the, 64–65
Public presentation of a play, 5–7

Refining process, the, 21–29
Religious consciousness, the, 64, 66
Resourcefulness, 65
Results of using dramatization as a method, 63–66
Rock, The (referred to), 58

Samples of colored cloth, 40, 45–46
Samson, 8
Scenes, 18
Self-confidence, 65
Self-consciousness, the lack of, 65
Sheets, the draping of, 49–50
Social organization, 52–53
Special days, 5
Spectrum hues, 43
Spontaneous dramatization, 13
Stage scenery, 46
Standards of attainment, 21–22, 63–64
Steps in the method, 12
Stories, biblical, suitable for dramatization, 56–62

Story: blocking out the, 17–20; organization of the, 57; selection of the, 7–9, 56–58
Structure of a good drama, 13, 57
Subject-matter of dramatization, 65
Summer conferences, 1

Teacher: the experienced, 23; the inexperienced, 32
Thanksgiving, 5
Theater, the modern, 46
Theory of color, 41–45
Trained leaders, 1

Use of color, the, 39–47

Weapons, the making of, 50
Workers' institutes, 1
Written form of play, 24

Young Women's Christian Associations, 2

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